

national economies by consistently reinvesting deposits in the communities they serve in the form of agricultural, educational, small business, real estate and consumer loans. Moreover, as industry consolidation continues, community banks stand out as the only financial institutions that keep control in local hands.

ICBM serves nearly 300 statewide members through its unique programming. In addition to its annual convention, various publications and wide-ranging committees, ICBM offers valuable services and products through its partnerships and associate memberships; a technology tradeshow; legislative representation; education resources; and networking opportunities.

ICBM continues the tradition started 75 years ago of innovation and community concern while it partners with the Pohlad Family Foundation to offer T.E.A.M. (Training, Educating, And Mentoring) Future Bankers, a unique summer youth jobs program that introduces students to community banking and invests in the futures of the next generation of community bankers. This year, 75 interns will be hired statewide to work in this valuable program. Every intern also will be invited as a guest of Twins owner Carl Pohlad at a baseball game on June 19th.

On the political side, ICBM launched a separate non-profit in 2004 called Debate Minnesota, a unique effort to bring civility back to Minnesota politics by hosting a series of roundtable debates that focus on issues. The Star Tribune, the state's largest daily newspaper, in an editorial on Election Day 2004, had this to say about Debate Minnesota, "Their concept for candidate debates is what made them stand out this year. The result was a series that drew considerable local media coverage, and expressions of appreciation from participants and observers alike. Debate Minnesota established a good name for itself in its first year. Debate Minnesota ought to be back, in more places and races in 2006."

From 28 original founders to a nationwide network of 5,000 banks, ICBA and ICBM continue to bring much-needed diversity and leadership to the banking world as well as the communities in which their members serve. I would like to commend both organizations for their innovative spirit and community dedication, and wish them well on their journey toward their 100th anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF NATIONAL BIKE MONTH RESOLUTION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution in support of National Bike Month. The League of American Bicyclists has celebrated every May since 1956 as National Bike Month. With this resolution, Congress will recognize the enormous role bicycling has in our lives. This month provides an opportunity to promote the benefits of cycling, appreciate those in the cycling community, and to encourage bicycle safety.

Bicycling is one of the cleanest, healthiest, most efficient, and environmentally friendly modes of transportation that exists. It is the

most efficient form of urban transportation in history. There are over 57 million adult cyclists in the United States, 5 million of whom choose to commute to work by bike. This transportation choice helps ease congestion on our roads and reduce environmental pollution while allowing cyclists to incorporate exercise into their everyday lives. In an age of high energy prices, overcrowded roads, and a growing obesity epidemic, biking is more important to the well being of our communities than ever before.

Communities throughout the Nation have reaped the positive benefits of biking. According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, bicycles are second only to cars as a preferred mode of transportation. National Bike Month provides the opportunity to recognize the significant impact of this noble invention and to inform others of the healthy, environmental, efficient, and neighborhood-friendly form of transportation.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate, with my colleagues, the extraordinary accomplishments of the Asian Pacific American (APA) community and to recognize the sacrifices they have endured. Their struggle to find a place in America without prejudice and repression is a story that all Americans should know, and I am pleased that the month of May has been set aside for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

I am so proud to represent the 12th Congressional District of California because its amazingly diverse population includes a large APA community, as well as the largest population of Filipinos outside of the Philippines.

Looking back over our history, it is heartening to see the advances that the APA community has made as a whole, in spite of setbacks and sometimes horrific treatment in our government's name. One of the most compelling stories came to an end earlier this year with the passing of my good friend Congressman Robert Matsui, with whom I served for 24 years. His tragic and unexpected death struck a chord deep in the hearts of all those who served with him. His success story is quintessentially American, despite the fact that when he was young, the U.S. government denied him the freedom bestowed to him under the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, even though his family had been in the United States for two generations, Bob and his family, like 114,000 other Americans of Japanese descent, were rounded up and sent to detention camps. The courage it took, not only to survive and to prosper from this slap in the face to all Americans, but to go on to become part of the government in the hope of changing the government's policies and working atmosphere is extremely commendable. And change the atmosphere he did, passing the Japanese-American Redress Act, which produced an official apology from the Federal Government. He became one of the highest-ranking Asian Pacific Americans in

Congress during the 108th while serving as the Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. He exemplified the fight for freedom and liberty and he is sorely missed. We welcome Bob's wife, and my friend DORIS, as she begins her Congressional service.

Many other Congressional colleagues of APA heritage have served our country with distinction. Currently there are over 300,000 veterans of Asian or Pacific Islander decent, and while many served our country with distinction, no unit in the armed forces deserves more credit than the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Comprised solely of persons of Japanese background, this band of brothers was the most decorated unit for its size in U.S. history. My good friend and colleague, Senator DANIEL INOUE earned the Medal of Honor fighting in the 442nd.

As a group, the people of the APA communities are fighters, throwing off the second class citizenship that was foisted upon them during immigration battles throughout the 19th and 20th centuries to become among the highest achieving Americans. Half of all members of the APA adult community have college degrees, compared with one quarter of the adult U.S. population is but one mark of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, although it is important to recognize the achievements made, this month will also allow us to renew our focus on the problems that face the APA community, problems like affordable housing, racial profiling, language barriers and unfair immigration laws. One of the largest problems facing the Asian Pacific Community is the perception that the community is thriving without exception. With a record amount of those in the APA community going to college, one would tend to think that way, but in reality there are large sections of the APA populations who have very little education, and who experience financial depths that no American should have to face. There remains a problem that must be addressed when language barriers contribute to leaving one out of ten Asian Pacific Americans in poverty.

I continue to work with other members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus to create a better environment for Asian Pacific Americans in my Congressional District. I wrote H.R. 139, which helps to alleviate the nursing shortage seen throughout California and the nation by allowing Filipino nurses to use some of the unused employment-based immigrant visas. I am an original cosponsor of a bill that would authorize grants for institutions of higher education that serve disproportionately low income and underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander students. During the 108th Congress, I was a cosponsor of a bill that would give Filipino Americans residing as legal aliens or citizens of the U.S. the same health and pension benefits that all other veterans of World War II receive, as well as many other bills that support the APA community.

The Bay Area is lucky to be home to one of the largest populations of Asian Pacific Americans in the United States, particularly San Francisco and San Mateo County. For centuries it has been one of the great gateways to America, just like St. Louis for those coming west. I thank San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsome and the members of the Board of Supervisors for their proclamation officially